

**AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:**

On pages 7-8, replace paragraph [0031] with the following paragraph:

To enhance the insulating properties of the sealed vacuum layer, an optical coating ~~38~~ 28 having low-emissivity properties may be applied to the outer surface of the inner tube 24. The reflective surface of the optical coating limits passage of heat-transferring radiation through the coated surface. The optical coating may comprise copper, a material having a desirably low emissivity when polished. Copper, however, is subject to rapid oxidation, which would detrimentally increase its emissivity. Highly polished copper, for example, can have an emissivity as low as approximately 0.02 while heavily oxidized copper may have an emissivity as high as approximately 0.78.